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CANBERRA, Australia

Retired U.S. military personnel and government advisers dominated top positions in the mysterious Nugan Hand Bank, which was accused of acting as a CIA front, an official Australian report said Tuesday.

The report by a Federal Australian Government and New South Wales State Government joint Task Force was delivered to both the state and federal parliaments.

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The now bankrupt bank has been accused of being a CIA front and of carrying out international drug smuggling and arms dealing. Many of the charges were raised in Australian Penthouse, an affiliate of the U.S. magazine with the same name.

The CIA has denied the charges.

In introducing the report, Federal Administrative Services Minister Kevin Newman said it made no conclusions about links between the CIA and the bank, although bank personnel had ties with the CIA.

Investigations into the bank began in January 1980 when the bank's founder Frank Nugan was found shot dead near Sydney, an apparent suicide. Reports the bank was engaged in drug smuggling and arms dealing were circulating before his death.

Deputy Opposition Labor Leader Lionel Bowen said he believed after reading the report the bank had nothing to do with the CIA intelligence operations, but he also felt the CIA was involved in the bank.

Bowen quoted a recent American television report quoting former bank operative Neil Evans as saying the bank was established as the paymaster for the CIA throughout the world.

On the crime aspects of the bank, Bowen said he believed it wasn't involved with the agency, but he also doubted the truth would come out.

"I don't believe anyone will ever get to the bottom of the Nugan Hand Operation," he said. "Intelligence operations will probably be covered up because of the reason that there is no need to know."

Many sections in the report were deleted since the task force is still carrying out inquiries that may lead to criminal charges.

The report said several Americans were involved in the Nugan Hand operation, subject to investigation by Senate committees in America.

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They included:

-Retired Rear Admiral Earl P. Yates, formerly Head of Planning for U.S. Pacific Command and senior aide to the Secretary of U.S. Navy, who joined Nugan Hand in 1977 running the operation in the Grand Cayman Islands and Manila. He was the main recruiter for the bank.

-William Colby, head of the CIA until 1976, who was a legal adviser to the bank. His business card was found on the seat of the car in which Nugan was found dead on Jan. 27, 1980.

Colby was named in the report because he sent the liquidators appointed after the bank's collapse a letter seeking reimbursement for legal services.

-Dale Holmgren, the bank's Taiwan representative. Former army officer in Taiwan and flight services manager for the CIA airline, Civil Air Transport, later Air America.